

D&H History in an Electronic Format

By S. Robert Powell

In the period 2014-2018, we wrote and published twenty-four volumes of the history of the Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad and the Delaware and Hudson Company. Each volume is the product of extensive research and is abundantly illustrated. All of these volumes are in the electronic format, with one pdf file on one archival DVD. To read these DVDs, the reader inserts each disc into a computer's disc drive, opens the disc, and scrolls through the text. Shown here are the cover of the volume titled "The Honesdale Branch of the D&H" and the cover of the volume titled "D&H Steam Lines beyond the Lackawanna Valley."

The Honesdale Branch of the D&H



D&H Engine No. 142, leaving the switchback and heading up the hill towards Farview and Honesdale. Written on the back of this photograph is the following text: "The first steam train ever to run on the Honesdale Branch from Carbondale to Honesdale and return after the D&H Gravity was abandoned. It was a trial run with officials and crew No Passengers". Photo in the Clift collection (Jim and Maureen Clift), Hawley, PA. Jim's grandfather, William R. Clift, is seen, second from the left, in this photograph.

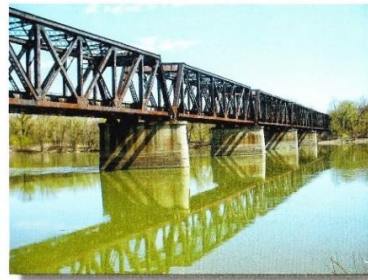
By

S. Robert Powell, Ph.D.

October 9, 2017

Published by the Carbondale Historical Society and Museum, Inc.
Carbondale, PA 18407

Delaware and Hudson Canal Company Reaching Out: D&H Steam Lines beyond the Lackawanna Valley



*Black Diamond Bridge" (Fish's Island Bridge) on the former Wilkes-Barre Connecting Railroad, photograph by Frank Dutton, April 29, 2015. This bridge, now part of Norfolk Southern's Sunbury Line (at milepost 690) crosses the Susquehanna River, from Kirby Park, Kingston (on the right) to South Wilkes-Barre, PA. *See Black Diamond Notes on pp. 625 - 631.*

By

S. Robert Powell, Ph.D.

October 9, 2016

Published by the Carbondale Historical Society and Museum, Inc.
Carbondale, PA 18407

Here are the basic facts on the 24 D&H DVDs in this series:

- I. *Gravity Railroad: 1829 Configuration*; 271 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-0-5
- II. *Gravity Railroad: 1845 Configuration*; 267 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-1-2
- III. *Gravity Railroad: 1859 Configuration*; 493 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-2-9
- IV. *Gravity Railroad: 1868 Configuration*; 601 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-3-6
- V. *Gravity Railroad: 1899 Configuration*; 291 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-4-3
- VI. *Waterpower on the Gravity Railroad*; 144 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-5-0

- VII. *Working Horses and Mules on the Gravity Railroad*; 226 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-6-7
- VIII. *Passenger Service on the Gravity Railroad*, 360 pages, illustrated, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-7-4
- IX. *Farview Park*, 290 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-8-1
- X. *The Steam Line from Carbondale to Scranton (the Valley Road)*, 341 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9903835-9-8
- XI. *The Jefferson Branch of the Erie Railroad (Carbondale to Lanesboro)*, 354 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9863967-0-0
- XII. *Reaching Out: D&H Steam Lines beyond the Lackawanna Valley*, 687 pages, ISBN 978-0-9863967-17
- XIII. *Troubled Times—the 1870s*, 291 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9863967-24
- XIV. *Carbondale Stations, Freight Houses, and the Carbondale Yard*, 241 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9863967-31
- XV. *Locomotives and Roundhouses*, 465 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9863967-4-8
- XVI. *Rolling Stock: Freight and Passenger*, 475 pages, ISBN 978-0-9863967-5-5
- XVII. *Anthracite Mining in the Lackawanna Valley in the Nineteenth Century*, 741 pages, ISBN 978-0-9863967-6-2
- XVIII. *Breakers*, 710 pages, ISBN 978-0-9863967-7-9
- XIX. *The Stourbridge Lion*, 432 pages, ISBN 978-0-9863967-8-6
- XX. *The Honesdale Branch of the D&H*, 386 pages, ISBN 978-0-9863967-9-3
- XXI. *The Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902*, 289 pages, ISBN 978-1-5136-2662-8
- XXII. *The People: the D&H, the Community*, 518 pages, ISBN 978-1-5136-2665-9
- XXIII. *The Quality of Life in the Lackawanna Valley in the Nineteenth Century*, 672 pages, ISBN 978-1-5136-2664-2
- XXIV. *The Birth and First Maturity of Industrial America*, 634 pages, ISBN 978-1-5136-2666-6

These DVDs, which are forthright, legitimate, and robust academic publications (there are 12,301 pages in the 24 volumes), all of which comply with the highest academic standards for research documents. These volumes, all profusely illustrated, were very well received by D&H

Gravity and D&H steam railroad historians—and by the general public--and sold well for many years, all across America and in England (Volume XIX, on the Stourbridge Lion, we are pleased to report, won high praise from British railroad historians in Stourbridge, England).

And then, from out of the blue (or so it seemed), a technology change took place, and computers (standard desk top and laptop) with disc drives were suddenly very scarce, which meant that if you wanted to play a CD or read a DVD (such as these D&H DVDs), you had to buy a disc drive player to plug into your computer (if you had access to a computer). And so, marketing D&H DVDs in a world in which computers without CD/DVD drives were not common/non-existent was problematic. How, then, do you market DVDs in a world in which potential customers did not own or have access to devices to play/read those DVDs?

In a word: To re-gain/secure a market for these 24 e-books, they would have to be made available electronically / uploaded to the Internet, to which, these days, everyone has access. Many options are open, most all with restrictive and/or mandatory ground rules and/or requirements to be followed by those who would upload material to the Internet. The fact that these 24 DVDs were already in an electronic format was an important and major first step in the right direction. Having explored a great many options, the only workable option that met our needs and requirements was to upload these 24 DVDs to Internet Archive.

Internet Archive, which has a long history of preserving digital content, and which functions like the reference department of an old-fashioned library (with a perpetually open door and intelligent gate keepers), was founded to build an American nonprofit digital library, with the purpose of offering free permanent access for researchers, historians, and scholars to reference and historical materials and collections in the digital format. It was founded May 10, 1996, and chaired by free information advocate Brewster Kahle. Items in Internet Archive are lent through “controlled digital lending,” which means that the books and materials offered by Internet Archive can only be read by one reader at a time.**

And so, to market these 24 D&H books on DVDs, we registered with Internet Archive, which provides a user-friendly structure for uploading material (via a template) and/or revising, material. Uploads can be one page in length or a thousand pages or more in length, and in various media. Uploads can be revised and re-uploaded at the uploader’s pleasure. Four useful tutorials are offered at the head of the Internet Archive homepage: How do I borrow a book? How do I download files? How do I search the Archive? Listening to music on the Archive.

When uploading material to Internet Archive, the uploader is asked to provide metadata (a set of basic data that describes and gives information about other data that allows users to locate items within a digital collection). Metadata, in other words, are a shorthand representation of the data to which it refers. To use an analogy, you can think of metadata as references to data. Think about the last time you searched Google. That search started with the metadata you had in your mind about something you wanted to find. You may have begun with a word, phrase, meme, place name, slang or something else. You were using metadata without even knowing it!

Metadata, well chosen and meaningful, it can be argued, are as important as the data itself. Without it, understanding a particular dataset can be a matter of guesswork, particularly if you were not

directly involved in creating it in the first place. That's why metadata are especially important within centralized data portals. By describing data assets they ensure that they can be discovered easily and understood by any user in terms of what they cover, giving people confidence to access and reuse them in their working lives. Good metadata reduce the time and effort around unnecessary downloads, as users can usually find the data they want, the first time they search for them.

In addition to searching for material on Internet Archive using metadata, if one knows the exact title of an item, as given by the "uploader" when the item was uploaded to Internet Archive, a search for that title leads to immediate and positive results. Volume VI in the D&H series in question is titled "Waterpower on the Gravity Railroad." Type that title in the Internet Archive search bar, and that volume will appear on your screen.

And so the 24 D&H volumes named above were uploaded on August 6, 2018, where they have been viewed/read/borrowed by thousands of "viewers" (4,069 viewers when we wrote this article). Since that date, "Archival Robert" has uploaded 427 separate files to Internet Archive, where they have been downloaded and read by an untold number of readers. They will remain there, forever, as the autonomous aesthetic phenomena they became when they were created by "Archival Robert" / their creator.

**Ironically, Internet Archive makes it possible for the common man to think/believe (1) that everything that can be known is known, and (2) that we are all intellectually equal / on the same page, so to speak, all the time—which is clearly not the case.

* * * * *